



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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WINTER STORM SAFETY TIPS *AS SNOW, SLEET SUBSIDE, CAUTIOUS DRIVING IMPORTANT*

With the first significant snow fall of the new year lightly coating most of the state, Delaware residents will be spared the worst of snow-covered roads and drifts across their driveways. However, the probability of sleet and freezing rain in the evening hours is plenty of reason to exercise caution, and when possible, limit driving.

According to the National Weather Service, the snow that tapered off by late morning in most areas will return by early evening and change over to sleet or freezing rain in most parts of the state. In New Castle County, the later band of precipitation could coincide with rush hour traffic and motorists are advised to be aware of conditions and travel carefully. The evening band of snow and rain is expected to come across Kent and Sussex counties after rush hour traffic, but motorists could still encounter slick, wet or icy roadways when leaving work.

New Castle County will remain under a Winter Storm Warning until noon, Wednesday, Jan. 28. Kent and Sussex counties are under a Winter Weather Advisory until 7 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 28. A “warning” refers to an imminent or existing weather hazard and signals the public to take action to protect lives and property. An “advisory” refers to weather conditions that are less serious than a warning. However, the resulting events may cause significant inconvenience and could lead to situations that threaten life or property, if not heeded appropriately.

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Temperatures are predicted to rise above freezing tomorrow and the rest of the week, so ice resulting from sleet and freezing rain tonight is expected to gradually melt from most areas throughout the day. Wednesday morning rush hour could still be affected by icy roads, especially in New Castle County. The motoring public should still take every precaution in traveling until reports indicate that roads are free of ice and are drying.

Drivers should maintain safe speeds, not necessarily the speed limit. They should also allow ample distance between themselves and vehicles in front of them. Stopping distances are affected by wet roads as well as snowy or icy roads. Bridges, overpasses and continually shaded areas freeze before other roadways. Allowing sufficient time for a longer commute, being aware of road conditions and of the actions of other drivers are all important for safe travel in hazardous weather.

Drivers should always be aware of road maintenance equipment and emergency vehicles and give them right-of-way, but special care should be exercised during bad weather.

With this relatively mild winter weather system reminding Delaware that winter can bring disruptive conditions, this is a good time for households and businesses to review emergency plans for sitting out a storm or for evacuating to safe shelter if necessary. Delaware Emergency Management Agency has materials to help individuals and businesses in their preparations and actions. For instructions and recommendations for preparing for many types of weather events, access the DEMA website, www.dema.delaware.gov or call DEMA at 659-2210.

The following are general tips to help you prevent injury and possible death, and property damage from the effects of storms, and winter weather:

1. Dress appropriately with head and hands covered if you go outdoors in temperatures below freezing.
Always provide shelter and water for pets or farm animals.
2. Have a household emergency supply kit, including a three-day supply of drinking water and non-perishable foods.
3. Ensure that flashlights and a battery-powered radio are in good working order. Have plenty of batteries or obtain crank-powered flashlights and radios. Use of candles and other open-flame light sources is not recommended.
4. Avoid over-exertion. Cold weather puts a strain on the heart, even without exercise. Many winter deaths occur from over-exertion while shoveling heavy snow or pushing cars stuck in snow.
5. Check on neighbors and relatives during cold waves and winter storms. The elderly are especially susceptible to hypothermia and falls on icy surfaces.

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6. If you lose power or other utilities, do not call 911. Use a customer service number for information.
7. If temperatures remain below freezing, take precautions to keep pipes from freezing. Contact your plumber or hardware dealer for recommendations of the best measures to protect or thaw pipes.

During bad weather, the public should continue to monitor weather conditions and recommendations on local broadcast media and on the state and media web sites.

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